

Deng Yizhe: The Art and Calligraphy in the Pure World

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Abstract: The formal aesthetics of calligraphy is an important content in the process of modern Chinese aesthetics. In the first half of the 20th century, Western aesthetics was more active in the Chinese aesthetics and art circles. In the process of meeting with Chinese traditional aesthetics, it had a profound impact on Chinese scholars and promoted their thinking on traditional Chinese aesthetics. The research perspective of most scholars has shifted from the direction of Western aesthetics to Chinese ontology aesthetics. Most of them studied abroad in their early years, focusing on Western aesthetics. After returning to China, they made active contributions to the modernization of traditional Chinese aesthetics. These traditional literati scholars all have a cultural background of middle school and western learning, so when they discuss the issues involved in calligraphy aesthetics, they unconsciously explain both Chinese and Western aesthetic viewpoints. Among them, Deng Yizhe's aesthetic research on painting and calligraphy is the most detailed.

Keywords: Deng Yizhe, Art, Calligraphy, Form, Artistic Conception

1. The source of Deng Yizhe's view of calligraphy form

1.1 The source of tradition

Throughout the history of calligraphy, calligraphers of all dynasties have always tried their best to maintain the status of calligraphy as an art. Cai Yong, a calligrapher of the Eastern Han Dynasty, has two existing articles, one is "Eassy on Writing" and the other is "Nine Trends". The former refers to "form", he said: "The criterion for writing a book is to have the image of the book in mind. There are things that can be symbolized vertically and horizontally, which can be called calligraphy." When the latter talks about "potential", he said: " Calligraphy begins with nature, and with nature, yin and yang will arise. With yin and yang, posture and momentum are created. It is only because of the softness of the pen that the strange and magnificent calligraphy works are produced.." In the Eastern Jin Dynasty, Mrs. Wei's "Pen Array Map" said: "If you can really do it with confidence, then no matter what character you write, you can make it look like a pictograph, and you will naturally enter a wonderful realm, and you can fully grasp the profound theory of calligraphy." Wang Xizhi's "After the Inscription of Madam Wei's "Pen Array Diagram" said: "Calligraphy cannot be called calligraphy if it is rigid and unchanging, neat and uniform, the shape of thousands of characters is similar and there

is no difference, and there is no vitality and spirituality." Sun Guoting of the Tang Dynasty advocated that calligraphy should "reveal the author's temperament and the author's sorrow and joy should be reflected." In Song Dynasty, Mi Fu's "Haiyue Famous Words" said: "Calligraphy pays attention to change and innovation, it's more important to be ingenious in shape but not in the use of brute force, the other important thing is that the shape is ingenious but not contrived." Zhao Mengfu of the Yuan Dynasty commented on in "Songxue Zhai Shu Lun": "The calligraphy will change with the times and the inherited things will keep pace with the times, but the use of the pen has always remained unchanged for thousands of years." Xiang Mu's "Calligraphy Yayan" in the Ming Dynasty said in the "Shape and Quality Chapter": "The influence of people on calligraphy is related to the heart and hands. Different people have different forms of calligraphy" During the period of the Republic of China, Deng Yizhe inherited and transformed this view, and changed the phrases of the book "literary jargon" into the vernacular. He clearly pointed out that in calligraphy, in addition to form, other words are the enemy of art. In other words, the expression of calligraphy is in pointillism, and the artistic conception is beautiful. The more complex and harmonious the relationship between pointillism is, the stronger the charm of the artistic conception of calligraphy, and the easier it is to infect the audience. The key to the audience's appreciation of calligraphy is to appreciate the point painting The pros and cons and the level of style are not the enjoyment of the semantic realm conveyed by the content reading knowledge of text knowledge. This is exactly what Deng Yizhe emphasized: in the process of appreciating art and feeling beauty, the artist must "swear to overcome difficulties" for "reasons in human affairs, universal knowledge, and unswerving instinct" .

1.2 The source of Western learning

Deng Yizhe, in the last article of his "Spanish Travel Notes" collection, "A Supplement to Botticelli's Masterpiece "Spring", used the Western aesthetic formal analysis method to explain in detail the 15th century Italian Florentine artist Botticelli's "Spring". piece of work. He first analyzed the structure of the work from the overall schema of the painting and dissected the echo relationship of lines ("S"-shaped curve and straight line) from the dynamic and static posture of the characters. We can observe that all the figures in the picture are standing, the trees in the background are tall and straight, and their meeting points are concentrated on the smallest figure in the painting, Cupid, the god of love.



Figure 1 "Spring" by (Italy) Botticelli

In the color of the picture, Botticelli also used two "pin"-shaped compositions to echo, one, the red on Cupid's back and the red shawls of Venus and Mercury, the three form the "pin" shape; the second, the three goddesses on the left and the naked bodies of the spring god, flower god, wind boy and cupid on the right, the light colors of the three are in the shape of "pin". In addition, there are also the figures' body images and streamlined body postures in the picture, which are all artistic contents expressed by Botticelli. Of course, the deep meaning of the picture does not only stay in these forms, but goes further into the higher spiritual realm of the realm of beauty to appreciate the abstract meaning of the work. For example, he wrote in the article: The critics say that the lines in Botticelli's paintings are like the sound in music, only the randomness of the lines has no meaning of form, just as the sound of music has no meaning of words. This statement precisely explains the abstraction in terms of lines. ... Some say his colors are patterned, and that's where it's abstract. Third, the abstraction of body, the main method of expressing body is action and body circle. ... But, the lines, colors, and shapes of the painting "Spring" are emotionless at all?

This is Deng Yizhe's 1937 article "The Appreciation of Calligraphy", the most recent article analyzing the art of Western painting, we can clearly see the generation of "intangible" outside the physical structure - the expression of art. The abstract meaning of emotion presented in the picture. From this abstract meaning, we can find traces of the word "artistic conception" used in the article "The Appreciation of Calligraphy". After all, "artistic conception" belongs to the category of abstract words and is one of the important concepts in traditional Chinese aesthetics. It is not based on the formal composition in Western aesthetics to fully and delicately analyze the appreciation point of view of each part of the artwork, and to reproduce the expression level of nature or the artist's artistic will; instead, it should bring a kind of visual experience to the audience. Unfulfilled feeling. However, when Deng Yizhe devoted himself to the research on the aesthetics of Chinese calligraphy in the 1930s, he discovered that the importance of "form" to calligraphy greatly exceeded the narrow cognition of the calligraphers themselves, that is, the traditional calligraphers, because of their limited vision, became the "Pragmatism" that only knows one of transformation but not one of transformation, or "dogmatism" that only knows one of transformation but not one of transformation. On the contrary, Deng Yizhe believes that "form" is an essential ingredient in calligraphy. For example, in the second section of the text, he said about calligraphy: "All calligraphy can be summed up into two types: form and artistic conception. This is also in terms of the general evolution of calligraphy. If you talk about calligraphy, form and artistic conception are inseparable." For calligraphy, it has become a unity with the artistic conception, and the word "form" has undoubtedly become a tool for interpreting calligraphy. As for "artistic conception", from the perspective of appreciation, Deng Yizhe likened it to "the sound of music has no meaning of words". The appreciator does not touch the phenomenal reality of music, but listens to the harmony and beauty of the relationship between its sound symbols; What we appreciate is not the natural reality of the painting (reproduced natural phenomena as the content of imitation), but the abstract expression meaning that the painter endows the lines, colors, and shapes on the picture. He also said in the article: "The more abstract, simple, and obvious its performance is in all aspects, the more emotionally full it feels, and the fuller it can be to blow!" The generation of the picture (the expression of spirituality) is the release of the painter's emotions. The painter transforms his experience of life's impermanence into an inner emotion that leaks into every brushstroke of the picture. The picture is not only "full enough to be blown to pieces", but overflows

beyond the art form of the picture, breaking the chain between man and heaven and earth, blending with the world and the universe, and communicating with its artistic conception.

2. The definition of calligraphy

Deng Yizhe's definition of calligraphy: a book cannot be made into words without a form, and calligraphy cannot be made without intention. If a character is purely a symbol of speech, its purpose is limited to practicality, and it is enough to have a brief form; if it is a calligraphy, it must have an element of beauty in addition to the form. This beauty is the so-called artistic conception.

He believes that if calligraphy is to be established, form must be the cornerstone, and the artistic conception will be beautiful. If there is no form of characters as a support, the tool (carrier) for expressing spirituality will be lost; if there is no tool, the possibility of producing beautiful artistic conception will be lost, and the beauty is the most direct expression of spirituality - the shape of pointillism. Deng Yizhe said: "The artistic conception must also be supported by the form. After the form, if it is not in the form of characters, calligraphy will not be produced." Stippling creates knots, and knots produce chapters, and artistic conception runs through pointillism, knots, and chapters. The mood is accessible and spiritual. In the end, this spiral upward process enables book writers and viewers to "know their own nature and see their own nature", and everything is the creation of spirituality. However, after expressing the spirit of the calligrapher, the tool of "form" transcends the solid body structure and enters into a transparent artistic conception. It is only a means, and its purpose is to prove the true nature of the "existence in the chest". This will be related to the vitality of life, and it will be integrated with all things that are "living", giving rise to the spirit of writing (beautiful artistic conception). It is said in Zhang Huaiguan's "Writing Theory" of the Tang Dynasty: "Those who know the calligraphy well, they not only focus on the shape of the characters, and more importantly, how to examine its inner spirit and feel its spirit. This aesthetic vision and scale can make the work completely transparent, and the comment and appreciation of the calligraphy work must be accurate and complete."

If this article "Supplement to Botticelli's Masterpiece "Spring" written in 1936 is an attempt by Deng Yizhe to appreciate art by using the analysis method of Western aesthetics, then in March 1926, "Viewing the Art" Lin Fengmian's essay on the difference between Chinese and Western paintings at an exhibition of paintings and the essay "Chinese Paintings of Lu Yan" published in April 1935 are his rational considerations for Chinese ontology art. Its traditional Chinese painting "because of lines and patterns has become a tool of expression. In other words, it has become a tool of art"; Calligraphy has also become a tool for pure spiritual expression because of line and stippling (including the art forms such as ink color, knot, and spelling produced by line and stippling).

3. Calligraphy: "Pure World"

In 1959, after 33 years of separation from the article "The Difficulties of Artists", Deng Yizhe published the article "Review of "The Difficulties of Artists" in the May issue of Fine Arts. In the article, Deng Yizhe affirmed the artistic status of Chinese calligraphy. And aesthetic value, it is listed in the "base camp of the pure world". He said: So, I lined up the arts: daily utensils, architecture, music, Chinese calligraphy should be the base of the pure world; sculpture and painting should be the pioneers, "because these two arts are the easiest and the most comfortable and enjoyable for human beings. It blends with superficial and mediocre knowledge." And literature is the most cunning, only suitable for the follower behind."

He believes that when art is at its purest, sculpture and painting are not easy to approach, "because these two arts are most easily connected with human comfort and pleasure and superficial and ordinary knowledge", and literature is farther away. In this case, the pure spiritual art of calligraphy must be free from the feeling of pleasure (here, the expression of words in calligraphy does not rely on the reality of any phenomenon, it breaks free from its shackles and is purely spiritual creation. Calligraphy does not become calligraphy based on the complete writing of characters, but it becomes calligraphy because of the unity of opposites between "shape" and "potential", and the mutual growth and complementarity. In Deng Yizhe's case, it is "form" and "artistic conception.") and superficial knowledge, the limitations arising from the combination of the two elements.(here refers to stripping all art forms other than calligraphy, entering the pure form of the ontology to generate artistic conception or to appreciate the beauty of the work. For example, the art of the Renaissance, it is the product of the dual attributes of "religion" and "human nature" , "Religion" is the majesty of nature, "Humanity" is the symbol of wisdom.The "human nature" part in the painting does not completely exclude the involvement of knowledge such as theology, science, mathematics, medicine, history, musicology, biology, etc., but only creates with human vision and wisdom, so that the later art is more and more towards independence, pure form becomes more organic. The appreciation of calligraphy must be free from the identifiable words and the chapters that are too closely mixed with it - the feeling of beauty in other art forms such as Tang poetry and Song poetry, just like appreciating Zhang Xu's "Four Posts of Ancient Poems", a single The ingeniousness of pointillism and the "beauty feeling" generated by its shape and form are enough for the appreciator to be intoxicated.)Completely express the truth of art through the abstract charm of pointillism, so as to realize the evolution from the intelligence of the body to the intelligence of human nature, and ponder the essence of the body through the phenomenon of calligraphy, this kind of calligraphy can be called pure art, a natural expression of wisdom, and an art that can make people feel beautiful.

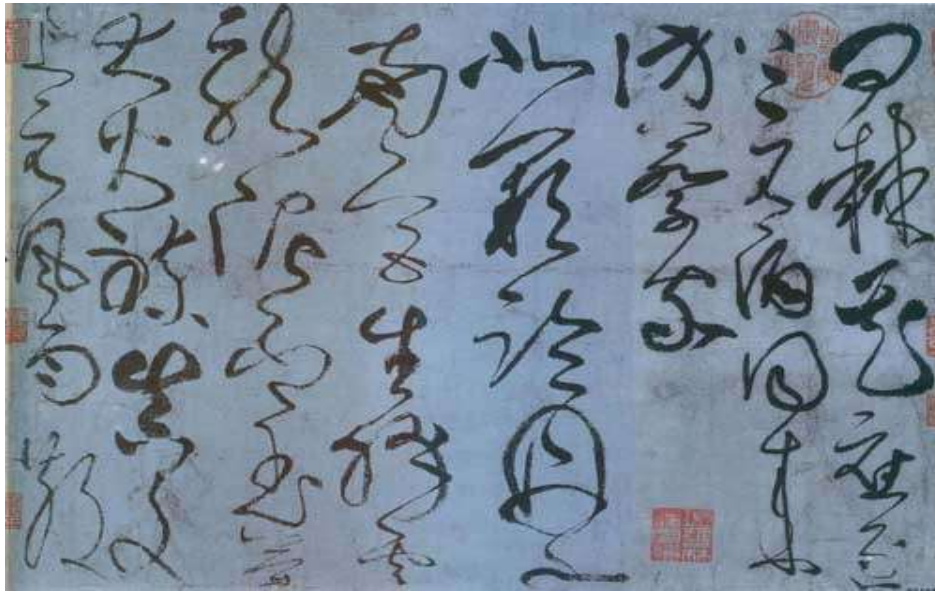


Figure 2 The Four Posts of Ancient Chinese poetry (Partial)

from Zhang Xu in Tang Dynasty

It can be said that Deng Yizhe's "The Appreciation of Calligraphy" is actually about the appreciation of the form and internal potential energy of calligraphy. Especially in cursive script, the regular style of the structure has been swallowed up by the stippling expression of spirituality. It breaks the shackles of physical structure, strengthens freedom to the extreme, and takes the perceptual squandering of inner potential energy as the main body of performance. If there is still a trace of rational struggle and unreasonable criticism of blocking potential, then it is the bottom line of the shape, and the vagueness can still recognize its style. Zhang Xu's wildly cursive "Four Posts of Ancient Poems" in the Tang Dynasty is the peak of sensibility without losing rational control. The picture above is full of smoke and rain. If it is in front of an audience who does not know cursive script and does not understand cursive writing, it is obvious that its text cannot be recognized; but if it is pointed out to the audience that this cursive script is the calligraphy of Zhang Xu, a great calligrapher in the Tang Dynasty, they will definitely applaud. The reason is very simple: Zhang Xu and Four Posts of Ancient Poems were not achieved because of the readable and readable words, but because of the thick and dry strokes, the ups and downs of the posture, the full emotional concentration, the rhythm that complemented each other and the natural development of artistic conception, these elements make the viewers moved. As a result, Zhang Xu's name will endure forever, and "Four Posts of Ancient Poems" will remain in the annals of history.

4. Conclusion

The author believes that Deng Yizhe's views on art and beauty have affected his cognition of the beauty of Chinese calligraphy. In the article "The Appreciation of Calligraphy", Deng Yizhe's understanding of calligraphy is "the highest state of art", and the written content of the text is excluded from the performance of calligraphy. As discussed above, the performance of calligraphy is all based on the shape of pointillism, the relationship between pointillism, it is the original creation of spirituality, and the words and sentences of the text have relegated from the main content of literature to the secondary art of calligraphy. The location becomes the material for writing. In fact, calligraphy has possessed the characteristics of artistic beauty since its inception, but it is too close to practicality, so that the "poor" of art mistakenly thinks that its value is only in recording, which is the difficulty in understanding the artistic nature of calligraphy.

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